

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-18. *Cancel without prejudice or disclaimer*

19. (*New*) A protective bat barrel cover for a baseball or softball bat having a barrel portion and a handle portion, wherein the barrel portion is substantially uniform in diameter, and wherein the diameter of the handle portion is less than the diameter of the barrel portion, the protective bat barrel cover comprising:

a first piece of neoprene material having a first edge and an opposing second edge fastened together to form a substantially tubular casing having a first open end for receiving the barrel portion of the bat, and a second end closed off by a second piece of neoprene material fastened to the first piece of neoprene material;

wherein the first edge and opposing second edge of the first piece of neoprene material are fastened together only partially along their respective lengths to form a split that begins nearest to and extends into the first open end of the substantially tubular casing;

wherein the substantially tubular casing further defines an interior cavity of substantially uniform diameter and is adapted to cover substantially only the barrel portion of the bat when the bat is inserted into the interior cavity such that an end of the barrel portion abuts the closed second end of the substantially tubular casing; and

fastening means mounted on the substantially tubular casing adjacent to the open end for securing the cover to the barrel portion of bat.

20. (New) A protective bat barrel cover for a baseball or softball bat having a barrel portion and a handle portion, wherein the barrel portion is substantially uniform in diameter, and wherein the diameter of the handle portion is less than the diameter of the barrel portion, the protective bat barrel cover comprising:

a first piece of elastic rubber material having a first edge and an opposing second edge fastened together to form a substantially tubular casing having a first open end for receiving the barrel portion of the bat, and a second end closed off by a second piece of elastic rubber material fastened to the first piece of elastic rubber material;

wherein the first edge and opposing second edge of the first piece of elastic rubber material are fastened together only partially along their respective lengths to form a split that begins nearest to and extends into the first open end of the substantially tubular casing;

wherein the substantially tubular casing further defines an interior cavity of substantially uniform diameter and is adapted to cover substantially only the barrel portion of the bat when the bat is inserted into the interior cavity such that an end of the barrel portion abuts the closed second end of the substantially tubular casing;

fastening means mounted on the substantially tubular casing adjacent to the open end for securing the cover to the barrel portion of the bat; and

a graphic displayed on the substantially tubular casing between the closed end and the fastening means.